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Food and Home Notes

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
OFFICE OF COMMUNICATION WASHINGTON, D. C.

33rd Year

May 17, 1976

No.20



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Canned fruit-pie fillings — already thickened, sweetened, and spiced — save time, according to USDA home economists.

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Underripe apples? Just store them for two weeks or less in a cool place, 60 to 70°F., to ripen.

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Be penny-wise: Remember, fresh fruit is generally highest in quality and lowest in price when in season. Choose only sound, fresh fruit.

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There is little or no waste to frozen fruits because they are usually served just as they come from the package.

* * *

Frozen fruits may retain high quality for as long as 12 months when stored at 0°F. or below.

* * *

ON FEEDING THE CHILDREN — IN THE SUMMERTIME

Summer Food Service Programs — free meals for needy children — will be available following the closing of schools, according to the Food and Nutrition Service, USDA. New regulations have expanded the program this year to include residential summer camps and non-residential institutions (if one-third of the children they serve are from needy families).

In order to join the program, according to the regulations, camps and institutions must accept financial and administrative responsibility for the program; provide an adequate and trained staff to monitor and operate the program, certify that all places where children are to be fed have been visited and evaluated as adequate; and document the need of the area they serve.

Maximum rates of reimbursement are established at 87.25 cents for lunches and suppers; 48.25 cents for breakfasts and 22.75 for snacks. Rates are adjusted according to the change in the Consumer Price index.

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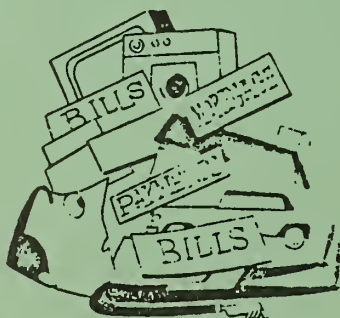
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THE AMERICAN FAMILY

What are the major problems families will face during the next four years? This was one of the questions discussed at a recent meeting of USDA's Extension specialists, as reported by Jay Hensley of the University of Kentucky. Some of the concerns included:

1. Money worries are now a major source of stress in many families.fifty-four percent of them fight about it.
2. Family financial decisions are seldom rational.
3. Families are hearing the messages on energy conservation, but,they are not responding with changed behavior.
4. The "psychology of entitlement" is widespread — what were once goals are now considered "rights".
5. Less than half of the U.S. families are the traditional first marriage mom-dad-kids nuclear family.
6. A shifting economic base often plays havoc with divorced families.
7. People tend to look beyond themselves for security — to employer, union, government, society.
8. There is a growing skepticism about the integrity of established institutions; and uneasiness about government.
9. The Women's movement is having its impact on family behavior.
10. Few of our older people (5 percent) expect to be able to live comfortably after retirement. They feel powerless.
11. One-third of the populace cannot handle its everyday money matters. One-third is functioning, but not well. The other third is doing "okay".

Management skills and some new attitudes are needed in American homes if things are to change for the better, it was pointed out. This involves more than cope-and-survive techniques to pull through the current economic crunch. Families must also shake the psychology of entitlement, take control of their own lives, and learn how to fit into the ecology, according to the extension program.



NEW FOOD RESEARCH

Xanthan gum* a product that was discovered in research at USDA's Agricultural Research Service, North Central Region — might be used in foods for persons allergic to gluten, according to the USDA scientists. They also feel the gum is especially promising for making high-protein, fast-foods like hamburger buns, pancakes and doughnuts and for prepared mixes.

Doughs and batters for new dietetic and fast foods can be made from starch and soybean protein with food gum serving as a foamed matrix — the way gluten functions in bread. It hardens when baked. The gum actually gives starch doughs the strength and elasticity to rise. It forms foam cells and expands with air and carbon dioxide generated by yeast or leavening agents — such as baking powder or soda.

Taste-wise, the product appears to be acceptable, too — home economists did not detect soy flavor in foods tested at the 15 percent level of soy-protein addition.

Further, the gum might be used to make doughs and batters from non-bread wheat flours or from all kinds of starches — corn, wheat or potato, for example. New foods might be made nutritionally - complete with ingredients like corn germ flour or oilseed proteins other than the soy products tested by Agricultural Research Service, according to Don Christianson and Harold W. Gardner, chemists who have been working on this project. Mr. Christianson says, it is even possible to combine the starch and gum to form fine textures which would make it possible to produce angel or chiffon cakes with this batter. Starch doughs without xanthan did not rise, however, when baked — they remained flat, brittle and coarse textured.

The research, so far, has indicated unlimited possibilities because of its simple method of "just add water and mix" and of the satisfactory volume and uniform texture.

*Product of a microorganism *Xanthomonas campestris*, growing on glucose sugar. It has been approved by FDA.

TO THE PRESS — BECAUSE YOU ASKED

What's happening in Hometown, USA — outside your own backyard? Information that should be useful to your readers — ideas that they could expand on and use in your community...you'll find all this — and more — in the new "Story box" — it's here to share ideas from the Extension Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Story box

...HANDICAPPED

HOMEMAKERS GET
HELP FROM
EXTENSION



Michigan State University Photo

Homemakers with handicaps and special needs are finding help through the Michigan State University Cooperative Extension Service. And Extension home economists organized a "Sew Without Seeing" workshop to show teachers how to teach blind students to sew. Interest was so great, plans are underway to have additional workshops, teaching other skills.

In another program, slow learners and Spanish homemakers, who could not cook because they could not read, are learning both skills. An Extension home economist teamed up with a remedial reading teacher to give the instructions, which eventually became part of the local school's adult education program. For more information contact Cheryl Brickner, Family Living Editor, Information Service, Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan 48824.

FOOD and HOME NOTES is a weekly newsletter published by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Office of Communication, Press Division, Room 545-A, Washington, D.C. 20250 — Editor: Shirley Wagener...Telephone-202-447-5898.